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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRATISLAVA 000190

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [EU](#) [KOC](#) [YI](#) [LO](#)
SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA TO JOIN EUROPEAN UNITY ON KOSOVO, BUT
ONLY IN THE UNSC

REF: BRATISLAVA 187

Classified By: Ambassador Rodolphe M. Vallee

11. (C) Summary/Comment: After two days of over-heated debate on Kosovo, Parliament resoundingly passed a resolution that, while containing nationalistic language, expresses the expectation that the GOS ultimately will seek a joint solution for the future of the Western Balkans together with other EU member states. FM Jan Kubis told the Ambassador that after the performances in parliament, he simply cannot issue a strong public statement of support for the Ahtisaari plan, and would seek to avoid a common EU position in the GAERC. Rather, he believes it is more important to focus energy on uniting the European members of the UNSC. Kubis would like Slovakia to be brought into the drafting process for a UNSCR as soon as possible; the GOS will propose specific language to the U.S. and USUN the week of April 2. Kubis feels politically isolated, but still believes he has a mandate from Prime Minister Fico to join any European consensus at the UNSC in favor of Ahtisaari's proposal. End summary/comment.

Parliament Approves Kosovo Resolution

12. (C) After two full days of debate in which MPs competed to prove which of them was the most stridently nationalist, Parliament voted to pass a non-binding resolution on Kosovo. In order to reach consensus across coalition-opposition lines, previous language criticizing the 1999 airstrikes and expressing the view that Kosovo should not be a precedent for international law were removed (reftel). Language was added to a preambular clause that called for the final status of Kosovo to be based on respect for the UN Charter and other international legal norms, "as well as legitimate requests of Serbia." 123 out of 142 MPs present voted for the resolution; 19 abstained.

What It Means: Kubis on a Tightrope, but Supportive in UNSC

13. (C) The Ambassador met with FM Jan Kubis early March 28, when it was already clear how the debate would end. Kubis told the Ambassador he is on thin ice; there is no way the GOS will be able to make a public statement in support of the Ahtisaari plan at the April 3 UNSC meeting -- just a week after the raging emotional performances in parliament. Nonetheless, he stressed that the operative language of the resolution expressed parliament's expectation that the GOS will seek a solution for Kosovo together with other EU member states. (Comment: This paragraph remained unchanged from draft included in reftel. Indeed, in his attempt to recruit members of the SNS, opposition leader Mikulas Dzurinda claimed during the debate that the original draft could allow the GOS to support Ahtisaari. End Comment) Kubis said he

would work to avoid a common EU statement on Kosovo at the next GAERC meeting. Rather, he wants to concentrate efforts to build "EU consensus" among European members of the UN Security Council. He plans to advocate this idea at a meeting of EU UNSC members with U.S. representative before GAERC. (Comment: The German Ambassador was disappointed by this stance, assuming Chancellor Merkel's strategy would be to push for wide EU consensus. We also informed our British colleagues of Kubis's planned approach.)

¶4. (C) Despite his reluctance to speak out publicly, Kubis told the Ambassador he has already informed Serb leaders Tadic and Kostunica, as well as the Indonesian foreign minister, that Slovakia will be in sync with the other EU members on the UNSC. Kubis is prepared to travel to Washington and NY during the April 16-20 timeframe to give the same message to Secretary Rice and other UNSC members. Kubis is convinced that he still has PM Fico's commitment to vote at the UNSC in line with other Europeans in support of Ahtisaari. He said that Slovakia's statement April 3 will be "neutral," reflecting the fundamentals of the MFA's 3/27 statement (reftel). We will stress the importance of declaring support for Ahtisaari in the closed consultations.

Drafting a UNSCR: Slovak Request

¶5. (C) Kubis requested that Slovakia be brought into the drafting process for a UNSCR as soon as possible. He said he would pass some suggestions both to the Embassy and to Slovak PermRep Burian the week of April 2. The Slovaks would like to include language stating that Kosovo shall not be a precedent. Kubis's chef de cabinet told us Slovakia would also like to propose language regarding implementation of the protections for minority communities and cultural sites per the Ahtisaari plan. This language would give the Serbs more

confidence/comfort in accepting final status. (Note: We will forward the proposals immediately upon receipt. Kubis was not more specific at this time.)

Comment:

¶6. (C) Kubis certainly has the right to be nervous after the parliamentary debate. A week ago, he believed he had Fico's full support and that Speaker of Parliament Pavol Paska (of Fico's Smer party) had drafted a resolution that would allow him free rein to act on Kosovo. But after Fico's meeting with his coalition partners, much harsher language emerged and Kubis ended up politically isolated. Nonetheless, he repeated several times that he retains Fico's support to vote for a UNSCR, and that Paska "knows where we have to be." He continued to focus on the bottom line of the resolution, that Slovakia would act in conjunction with EU members. We, like Kubis, are eager to put the parliamentary debate behind us and help the Slovaks through the next steps at the UNSC.

VALLEE